

for the American people. I have enjoyed working with three Presidents, achieving historic investments in clean energy with President George Bush; transformative healthcare reform with President Barack Obama; and forging the future, from infrastructure to healthcare to climate action with President Joe Biden.

Now, we must move boldly into the future, grounded by the principles that have propelled us this far and open to fresh possibilities for the future.

Scripture teaches us that: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under Heaven."

My friends, no matter what title my colleagues have bestowed upon me—Speaker, Leader, Whip—there is no greater official honor for me than to stand on this floor and to speak for the people of San Francisco.

This I will continue to do as a Member of the House, speaking for the people of San Francisco, serving the great State of California, and defending our Constitution.

With great confidence in our caucus, I will not seek reelection to Democratic leadership in the next Congress.

For me, the hour has come for a new generation to lead the Democratic Caucus that I so deeply respect, and I am grateful that so many are ready and willing to shoulder this awesome responsibility.

Madam Speaker, standing here today, I am endlessly grateful for all of life's blessings.

For my Democratic colleagues, whose courage and commitment—with the support of your families—have made many of these accomplishments possible. That could not have been done without you.

For my dear husband, Paul, who has been my beloved partner in life and my pillar of support, thank you. We are all grateful for all of the prayers and well-wishes as he continues his recovery. Thank you so much.

For our darling children: Nancy Corrine, Christine, Jacqueline, Paul, and Alexandra; and our grandchildren: Alexandra and Madeleine; Liam, Sean and Ryan; Paul and Thomas; Bella and Octavio, they are the joys of our lives of whom we are so very, very proud, and they are a comfort to us at this time.

And for my brilliant, dedicated, and patriotic staff under the leadership of Terri McCullough, working together, the finest group of public servants the House has ever known, thank you all so much.

And, again, for those who have sent me here, for the people of San Francisco, for entrusting me with the high honor of being their voice in Congress.

In this continued work, I will strive to honor the call of the patron saint of our city, Saint Francis: "Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace."

In this House, we begin each day with a prayer and a pledge to the flag. And every day I am in awe of the majestic miracle that is American democracy.

As we participate in the hallmark of our Republic—the peaceful, orderly transition from one Congress to the next—let us consider the words of, again, President Lincoln, spoken during one of America's darkest hours.

He called upon us to come together, to "swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

That, again, is the task at hand.

A new day is dawning on the horizon, and I look forward and always forward to the unfolding story of our Nation; a story of light and love, of patriotism and progress, of many becoming one, and always an unfinished mission to make the dreams of today the reality of tomorrow.

Thank you all. May God bless you and your families, and may God continue to bless our veterans and the United States of America. Thank you all so much.

□ 1245

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. AUCHINCLOSS). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

#### FEMA IMPROVEMENT, REFORM, AND EFFICIENCY ACT OF 2022

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3092) to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to improve the provision of certain disaster assistance, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3092

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "FEMA Improvement, Reform, and Efficiency Act of 2022" or the "FIRE Act".

#### SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term "Administrator" means the Administrator of the Agency;

(2) the term "Agency" means the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(3) the term "appropriate committees of Congress" means—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;

(4) the term "emergency" means an emergency declared or determined to exist by the President under section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5191);

(5) the terms "Indian tribal government", "local government", and "State" have the meanings given such terms in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122); and

(6) the term "major disaster" means a major disaster declared by the President under section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170).

#### SEC. 3. REPORT ON RELOCATION ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit a report regarding the use of relocation assistance under sections 203, 404, and 406 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5133, 5170c, 5172) for wildfire risk to the appropriate committees of Congress.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Any information on relocation projects that have been carried out due to fire risks or denied by the Agency, including the number and value of projects either carried out or denied.

(2) A discussion of the possible benefits or disadvantages of providing relocation assistance that may reduce, but not eliminate, the risk of loss due to wildfires.

(3) A discussion of how the Agency may optimize relocation assistance when entire States or geographic areas are considered subject to a fire risk.

(4) An analysis of whether other mitigation measures are more cost-effective than relocation assistance when the applicant is applying to move from a high-risk to a medium-risk or low-risk area with respect to wildfires.

(5) An analysis of the need for the Federal Government to produce wildfire maps that identify high-risk, moderate-risk, and low-risk wildfire zones.

(6) An analysis of whether other mitigation measures promote greater resilience to wildfires when compared to relocation or, if additional data is required in order to carry out such an analysis, a discussion of the additional data required.

(7) A discussion of the ability of States, local governments, and Indian tribal governments to demonstrate fire risk, and whether the level of this ability impacts the ability of States, local governments, or Indian tribal governments to access relocation assistance, including an assessment of existing fire mapping products and capabilities and recommendations on redressing any gaps in the ability of the Agency to assist States, local governments, and Indian tribal governments in demonstrating fire risk.

(8) An evaluation of—

(A) the scope of the data available to the Agency regarding historical wildfire losses;

(B) how such data is utilized in benefit-cost analysis determinations by the Agency;

(C) what additional data, if any, may be pertinent to such determinations; and

(D) what, if any, alternative methods may be relevant to the determination of cost effectiveness.

(9) A discussion of the extent to which the decision process for relocation assistance appropriately considers the change in future risks for wildfires due to a changing climate.

(10) An analysis of whether statutes and regulations regarding relocation assistance by the Agency present barriers for States, local governments, or Indian tribal governments trying to access funding to reduce wildfire risk.

(11) An analysis of—

(A) how, if at all, the Agency has modified policies and procedures to determine the eligibility of proposed relocation or mitigation projects with respect to wildfires;

(B) the cost effectiveness of such projects, in light of the increasing losses and obligations for wildfires in recent years; and

(C) the effectiveness of any modifications described in subparagraph (A).

(12) An analysis of how, if at all, recent changes in the availability of fire insurance has resulted in modifications of policy or procedure with respect to determining the cost efficacy of relocation assistance for wildfires.

(13) An analysis of how to define repetitive loss and repetitively damaged properties in the context of wildfires.

(14) Other related issues that the Administrator determines appropriate.

#### SEC. 4. RED FLAG WARNINGS AND PREDISASTER ACTIONS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in coordination with the National Weather Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, shall—

(1) conduct a study of, develop recommendations for, and initiate a process for the use of forecasts and data, including information that supports the Red Flag Warnings of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and similar weather alert and notification methods, to establish—

(A) plans and actions, consistent with law, that can be implemented prior to a wildfire event, including pre-impact disaster declarations and surge operations, that can limit the impact, duration, or severity of the fire; and

(B) mechanisms to increase interagency collaboration to expedite the delivery of disaster assistance; and

(2) submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a comprehensive report regarding the study described in paragraph (1), including any recommendations of the Administrator, and the activities of the Administrator to carry out paragraph (1).

#### SEC. 5. ASSISTANCE FOR WILDFIRE DAMAGE.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall brief the appropriate committees of Congress regarding—

(1) the application for assistance and consistency of assistance provided by the Agency in response to wildfires; and

(2) the kinds of damage that result from wildfires.

#### SEC. 6. GAO REPORT ON GAPS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that examines—

(1) gaps in the policies of the Agency related to wildfires, when compared to other hazards;

(2) disparities in regulations and guidance issued by the Administrator, including any oversight of the programs of the Agency, when addressing impacts of wildfires and other hazards;

(3) ways to shorten the period of time between the initiating of and the distribution of assistance, reimbursements, and grants;

(4) the effectiveness of the programs of the Agency in addressing wildfire hazards;

(5) ways to improve the ability of the Agency to assist States, local governments, and Indian tribal governments to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against wildfire hazards;

(6) revising the application process for assistance relating to wildfires to more effec-

tively assess uninsured and underinsured losses and serious needs; and

(7) ways to improve the disaster assistance programs of agencies other than the Agency.

#### SEC. 7. CRISIS COUNSELING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 416 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5183) is amended—

(1) by striking “The President” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The President”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) TRAINING.—Each State, local agency, or private mental health organization providing professional counseling services described in subsection (a) shall ensure that, any individual providing professional counseling services to victims of a major disaster as authorized under subsection (a), including individuals working for nonprofit partners and recovery organizations, is appropriately trained to address impacts from major disasters in communities, and to individuals, with socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.”.

(b) RULE OF APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to amounts appropriated on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

#### SEC. 8. CASE MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 426 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5189d) is amended—

(1) by striking “The President” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The President”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) TRAINING.—Each State, local government agency, or qualified private organization providing professional counseling services described in subsection (a) shall ensure that any individual providing case management services to victims of a major disaster as authorized under subsection (a), including individuals working for nonprofit partners and recovery organizations, is appropriately trained to address impacts from major disasters in communities, and to individuals, with socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.”.

(b) RULE OF APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to amounts appropriated on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

#### SEC. 9. STUDY AND PLAN FOR DISASTER HOUSING ASSISTANCE.

(a) STUDY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall—

(1) conduct a study and develop a plan, consistent with law, under which the Agency will address providing housing assistance to survivors of major disasters or emergencies when presented with challenges such as—

(A) the presence of multiple families within a single household; and

(B) the near loss of a community, with the majority of homes destroyed in that community, including as a result of a wildfire, earthquake, or other event causing a major disaster; and

(2) make recommendations for legislative changes needed to address—

(A) the presence of multiple families within a single household; and

(B) the near loss of a community, with the majority of homes destroyed in that community, including as a result of a wildfire, earthquake, or other event causing a major disaster.

(b) COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.—The Administrator shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that provides a detailed discussion of the plans developed under subsection (a)(1) and the recommenda-

tions of the Administrator under subsection (a)(2).

(c) BRIEFING.—Not later than 30 days after submission of the report and recommendations under subsection (b), the Administrator shall brief the appropriate committees of Congress on the findings and any recommendations made pursuant to this section.

#### SEC. 10. REIMBURSEMENT.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall brief the appropriate committees of Congress regarding the extent to which the Agency is using housing solutions proposed by a State or local government to reduce the time or cost required to implement housing solutions after a major disaster.

#### SEC. 11. PERMIT APPLICATIONS FOR TRIBAL UPGRADES TO EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 614(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5196c(a)) is amended—

(1) by inserting “and Indian tribal governments” after “grants to States”; and

(2) by striking “State and local” and inserting “State, local, and Tribal”.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to amounts appropriated on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CARTER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 3092, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of S. 3092, the FIRE Act. This legislation led by Representative LOFGREN in the House and Senator PADILLA in the Senate is designed to ensure FEMA's preparedness and response efforts address the unique nature of wildfires.

The bulk of FEMA's programs are designed to serve the victims of disasters caused by floods and hurricanes. However, climate change has made the threat of wildfire in communities grow each year. FEMA must serve all disaster survivors equally and adapt their programs to meet the challenges of wildfires.

This legislation encourages FEMA to predeploy assets during times of high risk of fire, evaluates public assistance eligibility post-fire, addresses equity of assistance for Tribal communities, and requires trainings for crisis counselors and caseworkers to ensure that they are equipped to meet the needs of economically disadvantaged survivors.

I support this effort and ask my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, S. 3092, the FIRE Act, makes changes to increase congressional oversight, garner further insight into FEMA's process for wildfire disasters, and enacts reforms related to disaster assistance.

Specifically, this bill directs FEMA to report to Congress on cost-effective housing solutions and challenges or inconsistencies in the application of assistance in the wake of wildfires.

The FIRE Act also takes the first steps to improve the use of forecasts and weather alerts, such as red flag warnings, within the disaster declaration process so FEMA can be better prepared earlier to provide wildfire assistance.

Lastly, this bill engages the GAO to investigate gaps in FEMA's current wildfire policies and recommend ways to streamline the distribution of assistance to our constituents and the State and local governments facing these fires head-on.

I am glad to be able to work with Senator PADILLA and my colleague, ZOE LOFGREN, on this as California has suffered so much, as has the West, with wildfire, including a million-acre fire in my own district last year and repeated wildfires that have affected so many and displaced so many.

I will add that working with FEMA has worked well, but we do need to continue to improve the process as FEMA has primarily, up until the advent of such large fires, dealt mostly with hurricanes and floods of that nature. We have all had to adapt until we can actually get better forest management and other tools that will help us prevent fire, and so, engaging FEMA, we appreciate them, and we want to work to have an even better process.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN), the author of this outstanding piece of legislation.

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, it is no secret that our country is facing increasingly devastating disasters, including wildfires.

In my own home district, the SCU Lightning Complex fires of 2020 burned nearly 400,000 acres over 46 days across five counties, destroying more than 2,000 structures and damaging others. That was the fourth-largest wildfire recorded in California's modern history.

As chair of the California Democratic Congressional Delegation, I hear about fires like this almost year-round from my colleagues, but it is not just a Western United States problem. Fire risk areas are growing exponentially to threaten new districts and new States every year.

And fires don't rage only in Democratic districts. This calamity knows no political divide.

As wildfires continue to worsen, our government has not acted with enough urgency. It is clear that Congress needs to pass legislation to better prevent and respond to wildfires.

Last month, I joined State and local officials to specifically discuss this policy and operational gaps, and the systems that we have in place obviously don't work as well as they should.

FEMA's current statutory authorities and operational practices limit our ability to prepare for and recover from wildfires. That is why all the California firefighters, chiefs, and leaders I met with support the FEMA Improvement, Reform, and Efficiency Act, or FIRE Act.

We know that wildfires present a unique and increasing danger, and we also know that policies written with hurricanes, floods, and tornadoes in mind don't always translate well.

The FIRE Act would direct FEMA to create a process that uses the red flag warnings we are all too familiar with to take predisaster measures and predeploy resources to take disaster-specific damages into account during recovery and the like.

□ 1300

It is commonsense legislation, and I encourage my colleagues to support it.

I would like also to thank the co-leads on this bill—Congressmen THOMPSON, HUFFMAN, and PANETTA—for recognizing the importance of this legislation and for their hard work, as well as Senator PADILLA for his leadership in the Senate on this bill.

I thank Speaker PELOSI and Majority Leader HOYER for their efforts to bring this to the floor. I would also like to recognize Ranking Member GRAVES and, of course, Congressman LAMALFA for working with us on reaching agreement on something that I think will be able to pass the Senate.

This is a good bill. It will improve our response, and I hope we get overwhelming support here today.

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

The FIRE Act does increase oversight related to wildfire assistance and requires FEMA to report information to Congress so we can continue working—in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, on the floor, and across the aisle—to improve and streamline the disaster assistance process.

Again, we appreciate FEMA's efforts on all disasters around the country. We are just looking for a way to streamline and become even more efficient with that.

Madam Speaker, I urge support. I appreciate my colleagues—Ms. LOFGREN, my colleague from Louisiana, and Senator PADILLA—for the effort here today in building up to this.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, in closing, it is time that

communities impacted by wildfires receive the same quality of assistance as communities impacted by hurricanes and floods. S. 3092 addresses the threat of fire head-on and will make communities safer.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this good legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the House amendment to S. 3092, the Federal Emergency Management Agency Improvement, Reform and Efficiency Act of 2021.

This legislation addresses the federal government's approach to wildfires by setting a standard for implementing proactive plans of action for responding to wildfires, and by requiring reports on the effectiveness of FEMA programs.

These plans must include studies on providing housing assistance to survivors of major disasters to resolve challenges, such as the lack of proof of ownership, and to contract the National Academy of Sciences to study potential solutions to address the availability and affordability of insurance for disasters.

As the consequences of climate change become our new reality, it is our responsibility to be prepared in accordance with those changes.

Climate change exacerbates wildfires and vice versa, like a vicious cycle that can't be extinguished.

According to a report from the United Nations Environment Programme, the number of wildfires worldwide is projected to grow 50 percent by the year 2100.

The UN Environment Programme experts also reported that governments are not prepared for this shift.

This is no longer a matter of prevention, but rather a matter of preparation for what is ahead of us and for generations to come.

Across the nation, wildfires have disproportionately affected low-income families and people of color.

Disaster insurance for those in rural areas, low-income neighborhoods, and immigrant communities are often inaccessible, even though they are most at risk.

Native Americans are six times more vulnerable to the impacts of wildfires than their white counterparts due in part to the fact that they were forced to settle in fire-prone areas.

The FIRE Act would assess the need for the federal government to produce maps that identify wildfire zones.

This bill would also allow Indigenous tribal governments to apply for grants to better equip emergency operations centers.

Disaster prevention insurance has increasingly become inaccessible, especially to low-income families.

Disaster insurance is often beyond the reach of family budgets that are burdened with the skyrocketing prices of rent and food.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, tens of thousands of families were displaced after their homes were destroyed.

According to community advocates, about 50 percent of those households impacted by Harvey were low-income households and many of those damaged homes were in Black and Latino neighborhoods.

I worked tirelessly alongside the Houston Housing authority to reverse a FEMA decision

to not provide any fundings for the 428 Program, which would repair public low-income housing damaged by the Hurricane.

In cases of disaster, S. 3092 would require initiation of a process to determine the possible benefits or disadvantages of providing relocation assistance, addressing the growing housing issue for victims of disasters.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Maria that wreaked havoc on Puerto Rico, 92 percent of homes were damaged and 98 percent of those homes applied for FEMA's housing assistance.

According to the American Bar Association, 40 percent of those in need of housing assistance were denied due to a lack of ownership documentation stemming from generational inheritance of homes without government recordkeeping.

The FIRE Act would also develop a plan to address housing assistance for those who may lack ownership documentation in case of a disaster.

The effects of climate change are no longer a "what if," but our new reality.

Since these large-scale disasters will be inflicting damage with increasing frequency, we must be prepared for them.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON LEE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CARTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 3092, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## DISASTER SURVIVORS FAIRNESS ACT OF 2022

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8416) to improve individual assistance provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8416

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the "Disaster Survivors Fairness Act of 2022".

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Information sharing for Federal agencies.
- Sec. 3. Universal application for individual assistance.
- Sec. 4. Repair and rebuilding.
- Sec. 5. Direct assistance.
- Sec. 6. State-managed housing pilot authority.
- Sec. 7. Management costs.
- Sec. 8. Individual assistance post-disaster housing study.
- Sec. 9. Funding for online guides for post-disaster assistance.
- Sec. 10. Individual assistance dashboard.
- Sec. 11. FEMA reports.
- Sec. 12. Sheltering of emergency response personnel.

Sec. 13. GAO report on preliminary damage assessments.

Sec. 14. Applicability.

(c) **DEFINITIONS.**—Except as otherwise provided, the terms used in this Act have the meanings given such terms in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122).

### SEC. 2. INFORMATION SHARING FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SHARING SYSTEM.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall establish and maintain a web-based interagency electronic information sharing system, to be known as "DisasterAssistance.gov", to—

(A) facilitate the administration of the universal application for direct Federal disaster assistance established under section 3;

(B) carry out the purposes of disaster assistance programs swiftly, efficiently, equitably, and in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and the privacy and data protections provided under this section; and

(C) support the detection, prevention, and investigation of waste, fraud, abuse, inequitable allocation of resources, or discrimination in the administration of disaster assistance programs.

(2) **AUTHORITIES OF ADMINISTRATOR.**—In establishing and maintaining the electronic information sharing system under this subsection, the Administrator may collect and maintain disaster assistance information received from a disaster assistance agency, a block grant recipient, or an applicant for a disaster assistance program and share such information with any other disaster assistance agency or block grant recipient using such electronic information sharing system.

(b) **DATA SECURITY.**—The Administrator may facilitate the collection of disaster assistance information into the electronic information sharing system established under this section only after the following requirements have been met:

(1) The Administrator certifies that the electronic information sharing system substantially complies with the data security standards and best practices established pursuant to subchapter II of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, and any other applicable Federal information security policy.

(2) The Secretary of Homeland Security publishes a privacy impact assessment for the electronic information sharing system, in accordance with section 222 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 142).

(3) The Administrator, after consulting with disaster assistance agencies, publishes standard rules of behavior for disaster assistance agencies, block grant recipients, and personnel granted access to disaster assistance information to protect such information from improper disclosure.

(c) **COLLECTION AND SHARING OF ADDITIONAL RECORDS AND INFORMATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator may authorize the collection, maintenance, sharing, and use of additional disaster assistance information by publishing a notice on DisasterAssistance.gov that includes a detailed description of—

(A) the specific amendments to the collection, maintenance, and sharing of disaster assistance information authorized;

(B) why each such amendment to how disaster assistance information is collected, maintained, or shared is necessary to carry out the purposes of a disaster assistance program and consistent with the fair information practice principles; and

(C) the disaster assistance agencies and block grant recipients that will be granted access to the additional information to carry

out the purposes of any disaster assistance program.

(2) **NOTICE AND PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS.**—The publication of a notice under paragraph (1) of a revision to the DisasterAssistance.gov system of records prior to any new collection, or uses, of Privacy Act categories of records, to carry out the purposes of a disaster assistance program with regard to a disaster declared by the President under section 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170; 5191), shall be deemed to satisfy the notice and publication requirements of section 552a(e)(4) of title 5, United States Code, for the entire period of performance for any assistance provided under a disaster assistance program.

(3) **WAIVER OF INFORMATION COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Upon the declaration of a major disaster or emergency pursuant to sections 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170; 5191), the President may direct the Administrator to waive the requirements of subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, with respect to voluntary collection of information for the duration of such major disaster or emergency.

(B) **TRANSPARENCY.**—Upon exercising the waiver authority under subparagraph (A), the Administrator shall—

(i) promptly post on a website of the Federal Emergency Management Agency a brief justification for such waiver, the anticipated period of time such waiver will be in effect, and the disaster assistance offices within the Federal Emergency Management Agency to which such waiver shall apply; and

(ii) update the information relating to such waiver, as applicable.

(4) **GAO REVIEW OF WAIVER OF INFORMATION COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall issue a report describing the benefits and potential risks associated with authorizing the waiver of the information collection requirements described in paragraph (3).

(B) **CONTENTS.**—The report required under subparagraph (A) shall include an assessment of the extent to which a waiver described in paragraph (3) would—

(i) affect the paperwork burden for individuals, small businesses, State, local and tribal governments, and other persons;

(ii) affect the consistent application of Federal laws relating to—

- (I) privacy and confidentiality;
- (II) security of information; and
- (III) access to information; and

(iii) encourage or deter a State or other entity from participating in the voluntary collection of information for the duration of a major disaster or emergency.

(d) **USE BY OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator may permit a Federal agency other than a disaster assistance agency listed in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (f)(3) to use the electronic information sharing system established under this section for the purpose of facilitating disaster-related assistance if such agency enters into an agreement containing the terms described in paragraph (2).

(2) **AGENCY AGREEMENT.**—An agreement entered into under paragraph (1) shall contain the following terms:

(A) The Federal agency shall—

(i) collect, share, maintain, and use disaster assistance information in compliance with this section and any policies of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and any information protection and use policies of such Federal agency; and